

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SS-15 IGA-02 AID-05

USIE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-11 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 SNM-02

TRSE-00 NSC-05 OES-03 OMB-01 H-02 PA-01 PRS-01 INRE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3675

INFO DEA HQS WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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S/NM FOR AMB. VANCE; ARA FOR DEP. ASST. SEC. LUERS;
DEA FOR ADMIN BENSINGER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, MX

SUBJECT: GOM REPLIES TO WOLFF REMARKS ON NARCOTIC CAMPAIGN

REF: MEXICO'S 3504

1. SUMMARY: IN RESPONSE TO CONGRESSMAN WOLFF'S REMARKS CONCERNING THE MEXICAN ANTI-DRUG PROGRAM (SEE REFTEL), THE MEXICAN ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR, DR. ALEJANDRO GERTZ, HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE AFTERNOON OF MARCH 16. HE DISTRIBUTED A HARD-HITTING PRESS RELEASE, OBVIOUSLY CLEARED WITH THE AG, AND MADE A NUMBER OF STRONG EXTEMPORANEOUS COMMENTS IN REPLY TO WOLFF, AND WHICH AT TIMES WERE CRITICAL OF USG ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORTS. MEXICAN PRESS GAVE GERTZ' REMARKS FULL PLAY MARCH 17. MAIN POINTS GIVEN BELOW. END SUMMARY.

2. GIST OF PRESS RELEASE:

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A. COUNTRIES WITH HIGH DRUG CONSUMPTION HAVE

BEEN UNABLE TO ELIMINATE THIS MARKET, AND SOME THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN CONVERTED BY INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS INTERESTS INTO HIGH PRODUCERS OF DRUGS.

B. THE LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEM IN U.S. IS SHOWN BY CONSTANT AND INDISCRININATE, CONTRADICTORY DECLARATIONS MADE BY OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY SAY MEXICO SUPPLIES 90 PER CENT OF HEROIN ENTERING U.S., BUT DO NOT KNOW HOW MUCH TOTAL CONSUMPTION; THEY ONLY KNOW THAT 90 PER CENT OF HEROIN SEIZED APPEARS TO BE OF MEXICAN ORIGIN.

C. MEXICAN POLICE HAVE MADE SEVERAL TIMES MORE ARRESTS AND DRUG SEIZURES THAN THOSE MADE BY U.S. AUTHORITIES. THAT MEANS THEY ARE RELATIVELY AND ABSOLUTELY MORE EFFICIENT.

D. ONLY 250 MEXICAN FEDERAL POLICE ARE WORKING NARCOTICS. IN FOUR MONTHS THEY HAVE ARRESTED 1,197 PERSONS; SEIZED 125.4 TONS MARIJUANA, 106.4 KG. HEROIN, 116.3 KG. COCAINE, MORE THAN 25 MILLION PILLS; AND HAVE DESTROYED 19,729 OPIUM AND MARIJUANA FIELDS.

E. THE MEXICAN LAW IS VERY TOUGH ON NARCOTICS OFFENDERS AND DOES NOT PERMIT LIBERTY ON BOND. THIS CONTRASTS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, WHERE THE LAW IS MUCH MORE LENIENT.

F. THE U.S. ELECTION STRUGGLE IS USING AS A "BATTERING RAM" A COUNTRY THAT IS DOING MORE THAN ANY OTHER AGAINST THE DRUG PROBLEM. THE TERMS "TECHNICAL ADVICE" AND "ECONOMIC AID" ARE USED TO TAKE CREDIT FOR SUCCESSES OF THE MEXICAN CAMPAIGN, BUT ALSO TO CRITICIZE IT. THESE CONCEPTS ARE USED TO EASE THE PROBLEM OF INEFFICIENCY IN THE U.S. IT IS ABSURD TO THINK THAT "FIVE FLIGHT INSTRUCTORS AND 25 LIAISON PERSONNEL CAN ACHIEVE IN MEXICO THAT WHICH THOUSANDS OF POLICE AND TECHNICIANS CANNOT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ACHIEVE IN THE U.S."

G. CAMPAIGN IN MEXICO IS DESIGNED BY MEXICANS, CARRIED OUT BY MEXICANS. "BUT WE ARE NOT SO CHAUVANISTIC" AS TO REJECT TRAINING FOR MEXICAN SPRAY PILOTS OR TO REFUSE DRUG INFORMATION EXCHANGE WITH U.S. POLICE.

H. GOM HAS BEEN COMPLETELY OPEN WITH THE MEDIA OF COMMUNICATIONS AND HAS GIVEN COMPLETE FREEDOM TO ANYONE INTERESTED IN KNOWING THE WORK BEING CARRIED OUT IN MEXICO, FOR GOM IS PROUD OF THIS OPERATION. "BUT WE CANNOT BELIEVE THAT 'TECHNICIANS IN THE NARCOTICS TRAFFIC', WITH A 15 MINUTE FLIGHT OVER THE MOUNTAINS AND TWO DAYS IN ACAPULCO, WANT TO EXPLOIT A WORLD DRAMA, A NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY CARRIED OUT WITH COURAGE AND IN GOOD FAITH, IN ORDER TO USE IT IN THEIR POLITICAL GAMES."

I. MEXICO IS LIVING UP TO ITS COMMITMENTS, AND HAS PROMISED THAT THERE WILL BE NO POPPY HARVEST IN MEXICO. GOM HAS DESTROYED EXISTING POPPY AND MARIJUANA FIELDS. IT WILL CONTINUE COMPLYING WITH ITS DUTY WITH A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND NOT FOR POLITICAL REASONS*

3. IN HIS EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS, GERTZ MODIFIED POINT (I) ABOVE, TO EXPLAIN THAT THEY REALIZE FARMERS ARE REPLANTING SOME FIELDS AND THAT THE ERADICATION PROGRAM WILL HAVE TO BE CARRIED OUT ON A CONTINUOUS BASIS.

4. CONCERNING WOLFF'S REPORTED ALLEGATIONS THAT SOME MEXICAN BUSINESSMEN WITH DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS ARE INVOLVED IN NARCOTICS, OR THAT HIGH POLICE AND JUDICIAL OFFICIALS ARE PROTECTING TRAFFICKERS, GERTZ REPLIED THAT SUCH CHARGES ARE MEANINGLESS UNDER MEXICAN LAW UNLESS THE CONGRESSMAN CAN SUPPLY SPECIFIC, ACTIONABLE INFORMATION.

5. EMBASSY POUCHING TEXTS OF PRESS RELEASE AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG CONTROL, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchant0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MEXICO03505
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760101-0526
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760352/aaaabtmz.tel
Line Count: 156
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 JUL 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <29 OCT 2004 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOM REPLIES TO WOLFF REMARKS ON NARCOTIC CAMPAIGN
TAGS: SNAR, MX, US, (WOLFF, LESTER L), (GERTZ, ALEJANDRO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006